

Message Text

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56

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CU-02 SS-15 USIE-00 SCCT-01

FBIE-00 L-03 SY-05 USSS-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 CPR-01 ACDA-07 SAM-01 /081 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2374

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

USMISSION USUN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 5574

E.O. 11612

GDS

TAGS: PFOR,

SUBJ: PRAVDA ON HARASSMENT OF SOVIET DIPLOMATS

REF: STATE 085459

1. SUMMARY. PRAVDA'S GENRALLY AUTHORITATIVE "COMMENTATOR'S COLUMN" ON APRIL 9 IS DEVOTED TO HARASSMENT OF SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES IN NEW YORK. THE NEWPAPER'S NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT, KURDYUMOV, ASSERTS THAT THOUGH RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY, CLEARLY REALIZE THE "EXTREMELY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES" WHICH SUCH ACTS CAN HAVE, NO ONE HAS YET BEEN ARRESTED. HE REJECTS THE ARGUMENT THAT PROVIDING COMPLETE SECURITY IS IMPOSSIBLE BECAUSE THE U.S. IS AN OPEN SOCIETY. WE REGARD THE COMMENTARY AS SOMETHING OF AN ESCALATION OF PUBLIC RHETORIC ON THE ISSUE, BUT WOULD EMPHASIZE THAT IT IS NOT A SHARP ONE; WHILE VOICING OBVIOUS AND UNDERSTANDABLE DISCONTENT IT REFRAINS FROM DIRECT ACCUSATIONS OF "CONNIVANCE" BY U.S. AUTHORITIES AND IS GENERALLY LESS THREATENING IN TONE THAN EARLIER TASS REPORTING. END SUMMARY.

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2. KURDYUMOV LISTS THE VARIOUS ATTACKS AND ACTS OF HARASSMENT WHICH HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT AGAINST SOVIET ESTABLISHMENTS IN NEW YORK IN THE PAST MONTH, AND ASSERTS THAT "AMERICAN AUTHORITIES KNOW WELL WHO IS CARRYING OUT THESE IMPUDENT ATTACKS..." ALL THE MORE SO SINCE THE PERPETRATORS THEMSELVES MAKE NO SECRET OF THEIR PARTICIPATION. NEVERTHELESS, HE SAYS, NOT A SINGLE ONE OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN ARRESTED, ALTHOUGH THEIR ACTS ARE IN VIOLATION OF FEDERAL LAW.

3. KURDYUMOV WRITES THAT "ONE CANNOT SAY THAT RESPONSIBLE LEADERS IN WASHINGTON DO NOT REALIZE THE EXTREMELY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH CRIMES," FOR BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAVE "SHARPLY CONDEMNED" SUCH ACTS. "BUT CONDEMNATION BY ITSELF IS NOT ENOUGH," HE WRITES; "THE CLEAR ESCALATION OF CRIMINAL ACTS MAKES NECESSARY IMMEDIATE MEASURES TO BRING THEM TO A HALT AND ENSURE THAT THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE FUTURE."

4. KURDYUMOV SAYS IT IS NECESSARY TO REASSERT ALL OF THIS BECAUSE "CERTAIN PERSONS IN THE U.S. WOULD LIKE TO REMOVE FROM THE AUTHORITIES THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THESE ACTS." AND CITES "A CERTAIN OFFICIAL" WHOSE STATEMENT THAT "IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GUARANTEE ONE HUNDRED PERCENT SECURITY BECAUSE THE U.S. IS AN "OPEN SOCIETY"" WAS QUOTED IN THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. KURDYUMOV CONCLUDES THAT HOW PEOPLE IN THE U.S. REFER TO THEIR OWN SOCIETY -- AS "OPEN" OR OTHERWISE--IS UP TO THEM; BUT PREVENTING ATTACKS BY TERRORISTS AGAINST SOVIET AND OTHER FOREIGN DIPLOMATS IS "AN INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATION." "THERE IS NO JUSTIFICATION FOR GANGSTERISM."

5. COMMENT: WHILE THE COMMENTARY SPEAKS OF "EXTREMELY SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES," IT IS NOT DIRECTLY THREATENING; AND THOUGH IT GIVES A ONE-SIDED PICTURE OF U.S. FAILURE TO ARREST ANYONE FOR THE MORE SERIOUS ACTS OF HARASSMENT, IT DOES NOT USE WORDS WITH EMOTIONAL CONTENT SUCH AS "CONNIVANCE" THUS, WHILE THE COMMENTARY DOES REPRESENT A SOVIET ESCALATION OF PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE HARASSMENT ISSUE, WE DO NOT REGARD IT TO BE A SHARP ONE. END COMMENT.
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